MONTEREY NEWS

February 2017
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The Monterey Broadband Committee: Larry Klein, Steven Weisz, Cliff Weiss, Kenn Basler, and Bill Johnson. This group has been working among themselves, with broadband groups from other towns, and with MBI and other organizations to find a broadband solution that fits Monterey. See their report on page 2, with two other articles on pages 2 and 3 that concern western Massachusetts's need for genuine high-speed internet access.

Who is Killing the Towns of Western Massachusetts? "It may be the governor. In the State House. With the lobbyists."
Broadband News page 2-3

Monterey Police Department would like to remind our residents of our mass notification system, Blackboard Connect.
Police Department page 4

There are some nice pieces that could be a great Valentine's gift, and you will be supporting the library's building fund.
Library News page 6

Gushing, flying down the ridge, I can almost feel the power of these massive stone giants sleeping around us.

I am from an untouched realm that is silently slipping through my fingers, floating farther and farther from my grasp
Young Poets page 12-13

So peaceful is the stillness when the wind
Seems lost to oblivion once more
Berkshire Winter page 20

I'm sure glad I didn't know that when I was eleven!
Ghost of Christmas page 10-11

I don't remember anything about a time capsule. —Peter Vallianos
Time Capsule page 11

Bear at Work page 21

Monterey General Store page 20

Gould Farm Barred Owl page 19

Join Connie on Tuesdays to build strength, enhance flexibility and range of motion, sit and stand tall with ease, and simply be more comfortable in your body.
Yoga Within page 9

As we consider rotting insects in a twenty-mile band three feet deep, we may feel something between disbelief and a major human yuck response.
Some Bears are Awake page 14-15

This bear had carried Mickey's big can of birdseed out onto the lawn, tipped it over, and was now lying down with its head in the can, gobbling up seeds.
Wildlife Report page 19

Monterey Broadband Committee Update

As mentioned and anticipated in previous broadband committee updates, January has seen an uptick in activity regarding developing a recommendation and selection of a broadband solution.

First, the state has received responses to its request for proposal (RFP), which was issued in November and due January 11. The state, via Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI), announced on January 23 that three providers have responded indicating their interest in providing services in Monterey. We will not see their responses for some time as the state will review and evaluate them before releasing them to the towns. However, we do know which companies have shown interest.

Second, the multi-town RFP was released on January 9 and a "pre-proposal" conference was held when vendors were able to ask questions about the process and the content of the RFP. Written questions were also submitted. All questions have been responded to and made available to potential vendors.

Third, the Monterey-only RFP was released on January 6. The "pre-proposal" conference was held January 13 and questions were due no later than January 18. The questions regarding process or content of the RFP were answered and released to potential vendors on January 25.

Fourth, a meeting was held with MBI officials on Friday, January 20, 2017 to review the multi-town approach to procurement of broadband services and the continued availability of MBI funds for broadband projects. MBI officials confirmed that construction funds allocated previously are still available and will be available should we choose to work with a vendor other than the ones that responded to the state's January 11 RFP. It was also stated that the engineering and design monies are only available to us (the towns) if we use MBI resources to design and engineer a network that we would presumably build, own, and operate ourselves. (To read more about this meeting, go to theberkshireedge.com/four-desperate-towns-make-broadband-pact-pitch-mbi-for-funds.)

Our next update for the March issue will review the status of the three RFPs that affect Monterey and will highlight the evaluation process going forward.

As always, please direct questions to broadband@montereyma.gov.

Monterey is also posting frequently asked questions (FAQ) and additional related materials on the town website (montereyma.gov/Public_Documents/MontereyMA_WebDocs/FAQS).

—Monterey Broadband Committee

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Berkshire Regional Planning Commission - Broadband

"Our region faces third-world connectivity, economic stagnation without 'grand scale' fiber investment," wrote Nat Karns.

"Without fiber optic networks, very high speeds, state regulation of the telecommunications industry, and a swift, large-scale investment in a broadband infrastructure, Berkshire County and the entire state will face significant economic and other risks."

In a seven-page letter written to Gov. Charlie Baker, and copied to numerous state officials, Nat Karns, executive director of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC), spelled out how fiddling with inferior cable and wireless services will spell disaster for western Massachusetts and the Commonwealth.

Karns wrote that the entire state requires a, "future-proof" broadband investment for which fiber optics is the only solution. "The task is like rural electrification in the 1930s," Karns wrote, also noting that the regulation of telephone companies "led to ubiquitous telephone service." "The region has struggled economically for forty-five years, and is increasingly reliant on entrepreneurs and sole-proprietors who are often home-based and can be located anywhere."

For the rest of the article, and to read the letter published on January 25 by Nat Karns to Governor Baker, go to theberkshireedge.com, under their "News" tab. You can also access the article and letter through the BRPC site at berkshireplanning.org/events/in-the-news/.

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Who is Killing the Towns of Western Massachusetts?

Susan Crawford, a well-known voice in telecommunications and technology, a Harvard law professor, and chair of President Obama's FCC transition team in 2008-2009, wrote an open letter in January describing her view of the effort to build broadband networks in western Massachusetts.

"This is the story of a dramatic failure of imagination and vision at the state level: Governor Charlie Baker's apparent insistence that Massachusetts relegate small towns to second-rate, high-priced, monopoly-controlled (and unregulated) communications capacity. It's a slow-rolling tragedy that will blight western MA for generations. The likely outcome: Only those plucky, scrappy towns that elect to build on their own will escape the grip of unconstrained pricing for awful service.

"The rest will fade into irrelevance."

Her article describes how the governor, through the Massachusetts Broadband Institute, which has been holding state earmarked funds since 2014, has worked to shape the process so that only the very large service providers like Comcast and Charter, deploying limited capacity cable (not fiber optic) would qualify for state funds. She describes the likely level of service.

"Yes, bad service. At a time when cities and towns all over America are installing gigabit symmetric fiber connections, allowing for productivity, creativity, and new businesses, as well as consumption of entertainment, the winning bidders will be required to provide just 25 Mbps download speeds and 3 Mbps upload speeds—at whatever price they choose."

She goes on to describe, "There's an alternative vision that would allow western MA communities to control their own destinies: subsidize towns that want to own their own infrastructure. This could be done through the structure of a state-authorized municipal light plant utility (MLPs). Following this path, towns would have a private company subject to their control to design, build, and operate connectivity to homes and businesses, either as a cooperative of towns or on their own." She details some of the ways that Wired West, a cooperative venture of many small towns, has altered its business plan to accommodate MBI's requirements, but still finds it to be an uphill battle.

Her answer to her own title question is, "It may be the governor. In the State House. With the lobbyists."

To read the full text of her letter, go to backchannel.com and scroll down to her letter, published on January 17. The letter is also on Ms. Crawford's website, scrawford.net, under "Publications" tab.

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Town Clerk News

Census, Office Closing, Rabies

The annual census will be mailed out by January 31. Please make any changes, sign, and mail it back to the town clerk's office. A self-addressed envelope is enclosed. It is of vital importance that the town clerk's office has an updated street list. Thank you in advance for your timely cooperation.

The town clerk's office will be closed from February 17 through February 25. Office hours will resume on Monday, February 27, at 9 a.m.

Our yearly rabies clinic will be held at the fire house on Saturday, March 11, from 9 to 11:30 a.m. Rabies shots will be available for all dogs and cats and you may license your dog at the clinic. All dog licenses will expire on March 31.

—Terry Walker
Monterey Town Clerk

Council on Aging News

The Council on Aging is currently hosting "A Matter of Balance," an eight-week series through February 22. If there is further interest, another session may be arranged. The aim is to retain mobility and balance, and to prevent falls. We hope to start a walking group when the weather warms up. Any interest?

How about getting together for lunch? How about volunteering to do well-being checks by phone? How about playing cards or board games or dancing? Any interest?

Tell us, please. Call 528-1443 x 247, or email me at wpurcell@bcn.net, or attend a 10 a.m. meeting of the council on the second and fourth Mondays of most months at the town hall.

—Kay Purcell

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Visit MontereyMassLibrary.org

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Tuesday.....9 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
Wednesday.....2–5 p.m.
Thursday.....4–6 p.m.
Friday.....4–8 p.m.
Saturday..9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
.....7–9 p.m.

Phone 528-3795

The Role of the Finance Committee

As we begin the fiscal year 2018 budget process, the finance committee would like to inform voters of the budget process and invite them to participate.

Put simply, the select board and the town administrator collect budget requests from departments and present these to the finance committee, which then analyzes and finalizes the budget and presents it to town meeting.

In order to avoid any confusion about these separate roles—the select board represents the "executive" branch of town government and the finance committee represents the "legislative" branch, including town meeting—we would like to quote from the *Finance Committee Handbook*, in which these roles are summarized as follows:

"It is the finance committee's responsibility to receive the budgets from the executive branch (either as a collective whole or individually by department), analyze them, have hearings where the department heads and the public can testify, and present a balanced budget to town meeting. That budget should reflect the finance committee's decisions based upon their best judgment of the issues and finances of the town. If the board of selectmen or town administrator disagrees with any item, they can submit a substitute motion, as is the right of any participant at town meeting."

From where does this authority derive? Quoting again from the *Finance Committee Handbook*:

"The statutory backing for this analysis is Chapter 39, Section 16, of the Massachusetts General Laws. It states: 'Every town…shall…by by-law provide for the election or the appointment and duties of appropriation, advisory or finance committees, who shall consider any or all municipal questions for the purpose of making reports or recommendations to the town....'

"'In every town having a committee appointed under authority of this section, such committee, or the selectmen if authorized by a by-law of the town, and, in any town not having such a committee, the selectmen, shall submit a budget at the annual town meeting.'

"In other words, unless no finance committee exists, or a by-law of the town specifically authorizes the selectmen to submit the budget, the budget shall be submitted by the finance committee.

"A board of selectmen in a town with an elected or appointed finance committee has no statutory role in the preparation and submission of the annual budget."

Finally, according to the *Finance Committee Handbook*:

"This does not mean the finance committee should have an adversarial relationship with the board of selectmen or town administrator. In fact, the finance committee should develop a good working relationship with both."

Monterey's elected finance committee looks forward to working cooperatively with the new town administrator and the select board. In the interest of transparency, we will also be inviting residents to attend a public hearing in March hosted by the finance committee, during which we will present a draft budget for public comment. Stayed tuned for the date of this meeting.

Respectfully,

—Monterey Finance Committee
Don Clawson, Chair
William Johnson
Jonathan Sylbert

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Blackboard Connect
Mass Notification System

The Monterey Police Department would like to remind our residents of our mass notification system, Blackboard Connect. The Blackboard Connect system is paid for by an emergency management grant, and is available to all residents. With this town-to-resident notification service, town leaders can send phone calls, personalized voice messages, or texts to residents and businesses within minutes, with specific information about time-sensitive or common-interest issues such as emergencies and local community matters.

The Blackboard Connect service is used to supplement our current communication plans and enhance public safety and first responder services. Examples of this service include severe weather warnings and updates, hazardous traffic or road conditions within the town or affected local routes, and any other situation that could impact the safety, property, or welfare of our citizens.

Please accept our invitation to participate in this great service. We know that your personal information is important, and rest assured that we will not share it with anyone. If you have not already received an emergency phone call from us, or you would like to provide additional contact information, go to the town website, montereyma.gov, and navigate to Blackboard Connect (Emergency Notification Signup), located on the left column of the town web site homepage, montereyma.gov. If you have signed up and are not getting messages or have any questions, please contact Chief Backhaus or Sergeant Johnson at 528-3211, or email mpdchief@montereyma.gov. Thank you.

—Chief Gareth Backhaus
Monterey Police Department

Transfer Station Winter Hours

Sunday	10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Wednesday	8 a.m.–1 p.m.
Saturday	8 a.m.–1 p.m.

The Lake Garfield Working Group

In its ongoing effort to support town residents and public servants in making informed decisions about the health, safety, and accessibility of Lake Garfield, the Lake Garfield Working Group (LGWG) held its most recent meeting at the town hall January 9. We were pleased to have two additional citizens in attendance as the LGWG feels its mission can be best realized with the participation of town residents, and hopes that others feel encouraged to follow their lead.

We received an update on the progress of the lake water quality study currently in progress (see report of the December LGWG meeting) and held a brief discussion concerning details of an eventual matching grant to study the source and nature of nutrients and pollutants in the watershed. Time was also spent discussing and clarifying the mission, vision, and purview of the committee.

As we try to understand the complex and dynamic systems, both sociological and ecological, that impact Lake Garfield and its watershed, it has become clear to the committee that the issues discussed, including eventual recommendations to the select board, will ultimately depend on the interests and will of town residents.

To this end the LGWG approved an addendum to our mission as follows:

We understand our vision to be, "A healthy, safe, and accessible Lake Garfield." With a primary focus on the health of the lake and its watershed, we understand our mission to be, "Supporting town residents and public servants in making informed decisions about the health, safety, and accessibility to Lake Garfield."

In carrying out our work, we believe the following principles are essential for success:

- Holding fast to our vision of a healthy, safe, and accessible Lake Garfield.
- Applying a systems approach to understanding Lake Garfield within its watershed, recognizing that a host of factors influence the health of the lake.
- Recognizing that the challenges we face are at once environmental and social, requiring solutions that combine scientific knowledge, innovative management strategies, and community engagement. The challenges are complex and interrelated, so the solutions will likely be complex and interrelated as well.
- Engaging in informed dialogue and collaboration among town residents, town public servants, and other stakeholders to ensure that diverse perspectives are heard, common understanding of challenges and potential solutions is built, and a commitment to a shared vision is created.
- Taking a long-term view. Balancing short-term urgency with long-term strategy.
- Taking an iterative, learning approach, recognizing that some trial and error may be required to achieve a good balance between human demands on the lake and its natural integrity.

Within the context of this greater understanding of our mission, the LGWG spent the remainder of the meeting discussing:

- The difficulties of defining the concept of lake health, including the issue of the invasive Eurasian milfoil.
- How to best solicit the participation of the community in the work of the committee.
- The idea of organizing a public forum (possibly in March) on lake-related issues.
- The feasibility of invasive weed control options for early summer implementation.
- Ongoing efforts to make the working documents of the committee available to the public.

The next LGWG committee meeting will be held at the town hall, 7 p.m., February 6. We will be considering forwarding a recommendation to the select board for a Notice of Intent (NOI) to be filed with the MASS DEP this month for the possible implementation of one or more weed control methods to be taken following the spring ice melt. All interested parties are encouraged to attend.

—Steve Snyder
Lake Garfield Working Group

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Monterey Community Center News

Your community center will be ready to open before many more weeks go by. The oak flooring has been installed thanks to the volunteer labor of Mark, Matt, and Mitchell Amstead working with MCC board members Michael Banner and Joe Baker. Now the baseboards are complete as well, and the final electrical details are almost all done. The last significant piece is the railing and handrail for the main stairway, which is in progress now.

The committee is working on establishing procedures and policies for MCC use and scheduling. We plan to make the daily and weekly schedule available for view on our website (below), with a contact person designated to take phone calls and emails about reserving the space for your activity. Meanwhile we will open up as soon as we can, with an "official" open house celebration a bit later, probably in late April. Stay tuned.

Thank you for your support! We are grateful for the year-end donations that we received in December and always welcome additional gifts.

—Friends of Wilson McLaughlin House
www.ccmonterey.org
PO Box 302, Monterey, MA 01245

Michael Banner

Mark Amstead volunteered, along with his sons Matt and Mitchell, to lay the new tongue-and-groove prefinished oak flooring in the first floor of the community center. Joe Baker worked alongside them. Matt is leaning against the new oak staircase to the second floor.

Monterey Library Notes

A special thank you to Sue Cain for sprucing up the library for the holidays. Thank you to all who exhibited in the *between the lines* community show, and especially the people who organized and hung the show. Community shows are a lot of work. Thank you as well to the Bounous family, especially Eugene, for the wonderful memorial watercolor show of works by his wife, Eleanor. (See page 8.) The family is donating all of the sales to the library, and you have until March 4 to get in to see it. There are some nice pieces that could be a great Valentine's gift, and you will be supporting the library's building fund.

Here's an update on the building project: The grant application has been sent to the Massachusetts's Board of Library Commissioners and in July we will hear what ranking we have been awarded. This is only for about two-thirds of the money, so we will be working to secure the rest of the funding during this time. The trustees are ever grateful to the Friends of the Monterey Library for an overwhelming response to the appeal letter. The Friends' building fund has grown to over $30,000 in this short time. They hope to raise $200,000 to help out. If you've missed out on this project, please check out our website for plans, and you can still donate online if you go to the Friends' page on the website.

—Mark Makuc
Library Director
MontereyMassLibrary.org

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Community Potluck Feb. 15
Deborah Alecson–Bereavement

Ah, the January potluck that wasn't! Early in the day of January 18, after a night of freezing rain and snow, Wendy Germain and I decided to cancel the potluck. As it turned out later, the roads were not that bad—Monterey, especially. Possibly a precipitous decision (pun intended). Wendy will do her presentation on the Monterey History Project in April.

For February, we have Deborah Alecson, of Lenox, who is a death, dying, and bereavement counselor. She came to us last February and we had an abysmal showing of only three people, but we had a great evening, nonetheless. Alecson is a thanatologist who facilitates workshops on spirituality in health care and has moderated interfaith forums on death, dying, and the afterlife. Alecson teaches Ethics of Health Care; Death, Dying and Bereavement; and Spirituality in Life Transitions for Excelsior College. She has a monthly column for *The Berkshire Eagle* called "Musings on Mortality," and has designed a course in thanatology for the winter study semester at Williams College. Her talk will be on "Dying well in a death-phobic culture."

The next Monterey Community Potluck Dinner will be held February 15, at 6 p.m., in the Fellowship Hall of the Monterey Meetinghouse. Please bring a dish to share with a serving utensil and a place setting and silverware for yourself. Everyone is welcome.

—Kyle Pierce

Bidwell House Museum

Bidwell House Museum
Restoration Update

If you snowshoe or come tracking on the Bidwell grounds, the sight of the house might be a bit of a shock. Scaffolding, bright blue tarps, and stacks of shingles surround the historic building. Though lacking in serene beauty, the evidence of construction underway is a great thing. Phase IB restoration work began in early December. This phase includes replacement of the cedar shingle roof on the main house and rear ell, insulation, structural stabilization, electrical upgrades, and painting.

Work is progressing well, though roof replacement came too late for one sill beam on the west side of the building. Years of moisture infiltration have caused it to almost completely disintegrate. The construction team is carefully replacing an 18-foot 7-by-7 inch piece.

All of this restoration work is possible thanks to the museum's generous donors. By the end of December, 108 donors have given $43,976 to match the $100,000 Jane and Jack Fitzpatrick Trust challenge grant. The campaign is well on its way. The museum has also applied for a substantial matching grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Commission's cultural facilities fund. Thank you to the Monterey and Tyringham select board members, Steve Weisz of the historical commission, Reverend Liz Goodman, Monterey ADA coordinator Mary Makuc, Betsy Andrus of the Southern Berkshire Chamber, Dan Bolognani of Housatonic Heritage, and our state representatives Smitty Pignatelli and Adam Hinds for writing letters in support of funding historic preservation in Monterey.

When the weather turns warmer, the museum will have an open house to let you see the work firsthand. In the meantime, the trails are in fine shape and not lacking in serene beauty or interesting animal tracks. Thank you for your continued support of your historic house, and come for a ramble.

—Barbara Palmer
Executive Director

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Knox Gallery

Eleanor Bounous, Watercolorist: A Memorial Exhibit

For a refreshing break from the gray winter landscape, please stop by the Knox Gallery to see the colorful, ebullient florals and landscapes by Eleanor Bounous that are on display through March 4.

On a Sunday drive from Westchester County, NY, in 1969, the artist and her husband fell in love with the view from high on Monterey's Partridge Hill, looking through the evergreens, with Lake Buel in the background. An artist since childhood, Bounous was immediately taken by the panorama of spring flowers through the birch trees—perfect inspiration for her painting. The couple purchased the property, became part-time Berkshire residents, and ultimately retired to Monterey in 2002. Eleanor's husband Gene, and her daughter, Eleanor Rochman, live in Monterey. Eleanor Bounous died in 2015.

Her paintings have been exhibited in the Berkshires, New York, and Connecticut, and have been cited for numerous awards. The artist said of her own work, "The motivation for my painting is something very much internal. I am driven by the totally relaxing sensation of watercolor on paper. Stretching the medium to see what else the watercolors can do for me is an exhilarating challenge."

Candice Meshil

The Bounous family has generously offered to contribute all proceeds from this exhibit to the Monterey Library building fund. What an opportunity—add a gorgeous watercolor painting to your art collection (or start an art collection) and benefit the library at the same time.

Another exhibit, *Arriving Where We Started: Portraits of a Family and Friends,* will open on Friday, March 10. Please mark your calendars and join us the next week, on Saturday, March 18, for a reception from 6 to 7:30 p.m. The exhibit features the paintings of Marc Simmons and Dorene Beller. See next month's *Monterey News* for more information.

All exhibits can be viewed during library hours. Knox Gallery, Monterey Library, MontereyMassLibrary.org/knox-gallery/ .452 Main Road, Monterey, MA, 528-3795. Facebook.com/Knox Gallery. @ Knox_Gallery on Twitter.

—MaryPaul Yates

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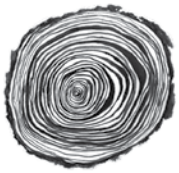

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Yoga Within
Chair Yoga with Connie Wilson

For five years now, the Monterey Parks Commission has sponsored Connie Wilson to teach chair yoga on Tuesday mornings. Recently the Berkshire Chamber of Commerce chose to spotlight Yoga Within, Connie's yoga business. Connie would like to encourage more people to take advantage of her chair yoga classes, so she submitted the following statement:

Laurie Knowles

"When you come to chair yoga, you may be surprised. We think of chairs as places to sit, but they are also yoga props that provide support while standing, balancing, reaching, and lunging. From 9 to 10 on Tuesday mornings, in the town hall, you will find a devoted group of yoga practitioners stretching and strengthening their physical bodies. But there's so much more. Yoga develops self-awareness, the ability to pay attention to subtle nuances of not only our physical experience, but also our moment-to-moment engagement with the world, both outside and in. Yoga is truly a meditation in motion. Though many are drawn to yoga for the physical benefits, it doesn't take long to discover the depth and breadth of this ancient practice that links body, mind, and breath."

Laurie Knowles

If you want to receive the benefits of yoga without getting down on the floor, join Connie on Tuesdays to build strength, enhance flexibility and range of motion, sit and stand tall with ease, and simply be more comfortable in your body. Weekly classes are free to Monterey residents, and only $7 for those from neighboring towns. For further information, call Connie at 528-3798.

Connie is a professional-level, certified instructor. She has been teaching yoga for the past fourteen years, and has taught at Kripalu for eight years.

P.O. Box 9
Thank You Rescue Squad

In mid-October our son-in-law had a serious accident when he was hit by a falling tree. Within minutes of our calling 911, volunteers from the Monterey Fire Department and EMT paramedics were on the scene. They could not have been more professional and careful and compassionate. They moved him safely down the hill to an ambulance that sped him to the Berkshire Medical Center and from there to the Albany Medical Center.

We are very pleased and relieved to report that after spending two months in a neck brace he is now nearly fully recovered with no permanent damage done. For this, we would like to express our gratitude to each and every one of the men and women who came to help us that day and to the emergency room doctors and nurses.

All of us who enjoy life in Monterey, even if only part time, as is our case, are fortunate to be among such wonderful, caring people. Happy New Year to all, and especially to all of you whose names we do not know who came to help us that day.

—Gerry and Midori Curtis

ॐ

Dean's List-Justin Makuc

The College of the Holy Cross, in Worcester, MA, has announced that Justin Makuc, in his first year, has been named to the dean's list for the first semester of the academic year. Justin is Mary and Mark Makuc's son, and is majoring in political science.

From the Meetinghouse
A Ghost of Christmas Past

Let's say that 1957 wasn't my favorite year. Things had been less than jovial at home for a long time. In the summer, I was hospitalized after a bike accident. Dad drove away one weekend in October, and in mid-December, Mom opened a thick envelope postmarked Reno, Nevada, that notified her that she was now a divorced woman. That last bit left her blindsided, angry, terrified, and prone to migraines, which left Christmas that year a bit up in the air.

She, my brother, and I all did what people do in tough times: the best we could. Mom found a new teaching job that paid better than the temporary one she'd taken when Dad left. She got us to school and got herself to work every morning, got us home, fixed dinner, and did dishes before she went upstairs to bed. She shopped and caught up with the house on weekends, then got us all to church on Sundays. Mark, a first-grader, kept on learning to read, did homework, played with his friends, believed the answers to the questions he asked. He even developed a comprehensive letter to Santa, complete with each desired item's image, write-up, and cost, all clipped from toy catalogs and Scotch taped to writing paper. I ricocheted between feeling like a fragile, unmoored sailing ship and wishing I were someone else, someone famous and powerful enough to make it all go away, or at least take care of us all.

Mary Kate Jordan

This glittery sphere is one I remember hanging on all my childhood Christmas trees but one. Now I happily hang it on my tree every year, here in Monterey.

December 25 loomed closer every day. When it was clear Mom wasn't able to do any decorating, I knew three things. No matter what, we were going to have—we needed—Christmas. That meant we needed a tree. It was up to me to bring it home. When I did that, maybe everything else would fall into place.

One snowy afternoon I went to the attic above the garage to look for the decorations. All I found were the tree stand—*whew!*—and a few strands of the outdoor lights Daddy used to put up to frame the front windows. Tree ornaments? Tree lights? Tinsel? Nowhere in sight. I took the tree stand into the house and decided to deal with the rest later.

We lived on five acres that rolled from lawn and orchard through pasture to a gully covered with evergreen trees. I tied an axe and a saw onto a sled and headed for the gully.

It was a beautiful walk, all white snow, grey sky, dark trees, and the green promise of a *Christmas tree!* on the near horizon. With such a sweet abundance to choose from, I found one that looked just right.

Halfway through the chopping, I wondered if this was a really good idea, but what do you do when failure isn't an option? Right: you carry on. So I did. When the tree and the tools were safely roped onto the sled, I started back home full of a warm glow that was only in part from the exercise.

I stowed the sled back in its place in the garage, brought the tools in to their place in Daddy's basement workroom, and dragged the tree into the house. Here's where my memory gets hazy. Did I set it up in its stand alone, or with help? Alone is possible, since it fell over the first time, so I must have had help after that. Was this

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the first year we stabilized the tree with a guy wire screwed into the wall, or did I set it up where I did because that was already part of the process? None of that matters, except the probability that Mom must have helped. As an adult, I can't imagine what she must have felt when she saw her older child so determined to do what she herself had always done, and would have done then, too, if she could have, and couldn't.

So, tree in house: check. Ornaments? Not so much. But Mark and I cut and pasted strips of construction paper into colorful chains. We made round paper ornaments decorated with crayons, paint, and glitter. I also spied a bowl of whole walnuts and, inexplicably, a can of gold spray paint. I spread newspaper across the kitchen table and put that to use gilding the walnuts. And when I found a box of paper clips that, unbent, transformed into perfect ornament hangers, I felt like Christmas had already arrived.

It was a great Christmas tree. There were presents under it on Christmas morning, too. Some were ones I'd wrapped, others were ones Mark had wrapped, and others were from Mom. There were even ones whose labels said, *from Santa*, in Mom's handwriting.

The next summer Mom found the missing ornament box. The next Christmas, I felt wonderful going with her and Mark to pick out a Christmas tree from a place where trees were for sale. That next Christmas, our tree had all the glittery familiars—including the one in the photo—hanging from branches sparkling with lights, on a tree standing firm and anchored in excessively-tinsel-covered glory.

But I'm really glad I was able to create the tree just the way it was in 1957. Decades later I submitted a manuscript for a kids' book called *The Never-Again Christmas* to a publisher. The rejection note leaned on the editor's certainty that "no eleven-year-old could have done that." My first thought was, *I'm sure glad I didn't know that when I was eleven!*

I didn't believe it when I was a kid, or when I read her letter, and I don't believe it now. At eleven, I must have been some kind of bumblebee: flying, even though my visible wings shouldn't hold me. But that Christmas was never about believing in the visible. Hard times never are.

But hard times can be the perfect fodder for developing a rich inner life. After all, inner life is never about believing in just what's visible. Maybe a rich inner life is based on that book title, *All the Light We Cannot See*.

That's what I remember every time I unwrap and hang the shiny silver-and-red ornament you see in the photo. Maybe the faith in life that's natural to children and bumblebees is available to unwrap any time of year. Even right now, in February.

—Mary Kate Jordan

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Mary Pullen, a housemaid in 1913, astride Uhlan, a great world champion trotter owned by one of the five wealthiest men in America at the turn of the century.

Uhlan—Champion Trotter
Gilded Age Racing

The slide show about my grandparents who were servants in the Gilded Age was well received at the November community supper. Some have asked if it would be shown again. So at 7:30 p.m., on February 18, I will present it again in the library. William and Mary Pullen were British servants who came to America in 1913 and ended up working for several of the wealthiest families in the Gilded Age. From 1913 to 1925, Mary was a housemaid and cook, and William was a groomsman whose skill with horses was much sought after. The three employers all inherited great wealth, added to that wealth, loved horses for racing and coaching, owned multiple homes, and most certainly knew each other.

—Steve Pullen

Sesquicentennial Time Capsule
Lost, and Nearly Forgotten

I'm somewhat confident it's buried in left field in the slope at Greene Park. It probably was unmarked. —Eoin Higgins

I don't remember anything about a time capsule. —Peter Vallianos

If you have anything to add, please contact the *Monterey News*, soon, before all is forgotten.

French Winters

We escape English winters,
Wrapped up and cramped in our speedy black Mondeo,
Taking us away from the persistent drizzle
of the rain and melancholy grey skies.
So thankful are we,
When we dismount our cabin that raced us beneath the Channel
as if we were a toy rather than real,
To France,
Home of the breathtaking, snowcapped Alps.
Snow.
The joy fills my throat as the sun bounces
off the white and glimmering wonder in the light.

I sprint out of my belt that has imprisoned me for countless hours,
And rush to the base of a wonderfully sloping mountainside.
The exaggerated slate grey stone beautifully contrasted
with the pearly snow and stunning blue skies.
Click go bindings.
Snap go helmets.
The exciting whir of the animated lifts drown out reality.
I've been spun into my own realm now.

I blink, and we're at the top.
Surrounded by jagged beacons of rock and snow,
I idle and attempt to take it all in.
Wind battering my flushed face, I inhale.
The sharp air does not surprise me,
and I smile, breathing deeper.
And I take off.
Gushing, flying down the ridge,
I can almost feel the power
of these massive stone giants sleeping around us.

Eyes gleaming, hair wild,
I would appear to have been born into these cliffs.
But really, I come from a world of damp, dark colors.

—Charlotte Micklewright, age 12

Young Poets

Charlotte Micklewr
David's daughter, gre
and moved to Londo
summer of 2015.

Margaret Ryan is An
She loves Monterey
of time here.

Where I Am F

I am from crisp sp
When fluffy cloud
And a breeze danc
Making my spirit v
I am from days wh
My soul longing to
To evaporate as a

I am from bitterly
Frolicking in a fres
And racing the wi
The freezing air te
But rushing inside
I am from sitting s
a cocoon
Sipping rich hot cl
and watch
landing silently on

I am from the wor
as my fing
From the deep ch
Reverberating insi
I am from listenin
Savoring the swee
Or feeling my hea
and dance

right, Emma and
ew up in Monterey,
on, England in the

n Canning's niece.
and has spent a lot

From

pring mornings,
ls lounge in a clear blue sky,
ces through the air teasingly,
want to rise up and fly freely along.
here my body can't sit still,
o free itself from bonds of flesh,
whisper of existence, like water at a boil.

cold winters,
sh sheet of sparkling white snow,
nd while shooting down a mountain on my skis,
aring against my face,
e of me, rejuvenating my mind and body.
snugly in my kitchen wrapped in a warm fleece blanket,
shielding me from the cold,
hocolate as I gaze out the window
ning snowflakes fall softly from the sky,
drooping boughs of weary pines.

nderful, light sound of the piano
gers flutter playfully up and down the keys,
ords that seep down into my soul,
de me.
g intently as melodies float through the air,
t, soft sounds,
rt race wildly until I must get up
e as a lively and wondrous rhythm plays.

I am from the cabin that I wish I could call home,
The place where my mind stretches freely and I do as I please,
Where the lives of humans and nature intertwine peacefully,
And where hope still lies.
I am from a calm place, where time slows to a pace that I can match,
Life becomes more meaningful for its simpleness,
And you must laugh just for the joy of being alive.

I am from an untouched realm that is silently slipping through my fingers,
Floating farther and farther from my grasp
until I can't reach but only grope in darkness,
From a reality that is no longer real.
I am from struggling against the powerful current of an endless river,
Desperately trying to escape from the churning water,
but unable to break free as it surges forward,
Always pushing, faster and faster, but to no avail.

I am from dreams of a paradise,
Awakening every day to the soft *chirp chirp* of birds,
Where the sweet fragrance of wildflowers
greets me in a lovely stretching meadow,
And with every breath, pure, clean air fills my body.
I am from a place that exists only in my mind,
Away from the constant bustle of life and scars of humanity,
A simple world where only peace dwells, and love overflows.

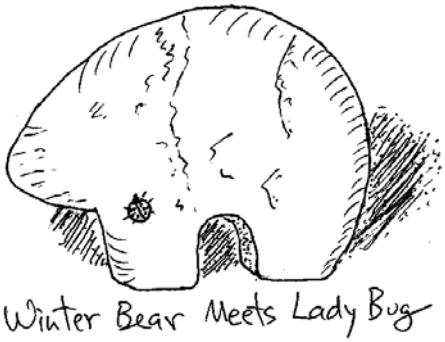
—Margaret Ryan, age 13

Some Bears Are Awake

These dark and chilly times, some of us go to sleep until things get easier. Some do this for a short time, like eight hours at night, but some for much longer, depending on so many things. Around here we have animal neighbors who do not head south for the winter, but have strategies for staying put. There are seven of these, known to some indigenous people as "the seven sleepers." They are warm-blooded mammals like us. Two of these are a kind of squirrel, called "ground squirrels." These are the woodchucks and chipmunks. Both are rodents, but woodchucks are true hibernators, and chipmunks not so much. Hibernation is a loosely used term and because it's hard to know what anyone means by it, we can think of it as some kind of long winter sleeping. Even true hibernators, the woodchucks, bats, and jumping mice, show variation from time to time. For instance, early in February the male groundhogs (woodchucks) may come up to look around. If they do, they might go look for a female who is in a den, and join her. This has little to do with the casting of a shadow.

The remaining seven sleepers are bats, raccoons, skunks, and of course, our black bears. I heard from Mickey Jervas of Swann Road in Monterey that last month, in one January week, she saw bears, raccoons, and a chipmunk, all wide awake. Also in January, a bird feeder on New Marlboro Road was taken down by a bear, and in December some sharp-eyed observers reported bear tracks.

Did these sleepers wake early, or did they never go to sleep this winter? Reading up on bears, I learned that January is the month the females give birth, so by the middle of that month they make sure to get into some kind of shelter and stay there for a time while the babies are tiny. New baby bears are only nine inches long and weigh six or eight ounces. This is smaller, even, than a newborn baby porcupine. To keep such a small baby safe, the mother has to stay right there. She must provide warmth and milk for a naked baby, in the middle of winter.



Except for the time the mother and cubs are together, bears are solitary animals. They mate in June, and after that separate. The males may stay up all winter, and this depends more upon food supply than upon the weather. In northern Alaska, some bears hibernate or sleep for seven months, but in coastal parts of the state, where food is easier to find, they only sleep two to five months. In a zoo, with a good food supply, bears may not sleep or hibernate at all. Some zoos have kept them fed and active all winter, for the sake of pleasing zoo visitors, but this results in unhealthy and overweight bears. Most zoos cut down on winter feeding so the bears will sleep.

Even after a long winter's sleep bears emerge in good health, not in any kind of starvation. The females look good in March and April, but by May they become lean. They may be nursing two or three cubs, and the early spring food supply is not so rich. Bears are omnivorous and when they first come out of the den, they dig for roots and eat grass shoots, bark, insects, mice, carrion, and anything they can find. In his *Life Histories of Northern Animals* (1909, Scribner's), Ernest Thompson Seton's detailing of spring feeding included insects washed up on the shores of big lakes. These were mayflies, not the biting little blackflies that some call "mayflies" in these parts, but the kind that are bigger, and hold their wings up over their bodies like butterflies. They do not bite. They are insects in the order *ephemeroptera* and emerge in huge swarms, mate in the air, and then die. They washed ashore in such numbers that they made a band along a lake six feet wide, six inches deeps, and miles long. One of Seton's sources referred to the mayflies as "lying in putrid masses to the depth of 2-3 feet," (Samuel Hearne's account of a Hudson's Bay Company journey, 1795).

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Monterey Community Potluck Suppers

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Deborah returns to discuss "Dying well in a death-phobic culture."

See the community potluck supper article on page 7.

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As we consider rotting insects in a twenty-mile band three feet deep, we may feel something between disbelief and a major human yuck response. To hungry bears up from hibernation, these mayflies washed ashore meant good eating in spring.

Here in Monterey we are unlikely to see such sights around our lakes in the spring, though we do have mayflies, the short-lived and delicate Ephemeroptera. Our winter bears, whether they are early emerging, or more likely, males that never went to sleep, are living on something else. It may be birdseed, not a factor in northern Canada in 1795. Bears also tear apart rotting stumps and logs, looking for insects, which they can scoop up with their long pink tongues.

Any bear in a winter sleep now doesn't have to eat or drink. They don't even urinate or defecate, amazing as this may sound, though they can wake and shift about. Once the females and new cubs emerge in the spring, they will stay together all year, through another winter, until the following June. Then the youngsters are ready to be on their own, and the females will be ready to mate. So a female, or sow, mates and gives birth every other year.

Some call adult male bears "boars," and the females "sows." Bears reminded folks of pigs, maybe because they are so omnivorous, or maybe because, like pigs, they know how to enjoy a good wallow in mud. Bears have also reminded folks of themselves, of us. Bears stand upright on feet that are much like ours, heels down on the ground. Indigenous people noticed that a bear, once killed and skinned for its valuable warm fur, looked remarkably like a human body.

Nearly all tribes of indigenous people consider the bear a powerful animal, and for many it is a clan animal. Bears play a major role in some religious ceremonies and a legend tells of a mother bear adopting human children. Bears are symbols of hard work, strength, courage, and of great love. Some say the bear gives life to the land.

To the Abenaki, the stars of the Big Dipper are the Great Bear, Kchi-awasos, who is reborn every spring.

—Bonner McAllester

Steve Graves

Thanks to the herculean efforts of volunteer ice makers, the Monterey rink opened on January 7 with a weekend of family skating, which was followed by informal, adult soft puck hockey games on January 9 and 10. Warm weather hit back and the rink abruptly disappeared. Weather permitting, Monterey adult hockey continues through early March and is free and open to players of all levels. For more information, please email sgraves8@yahoo.com.

Hockey Rink Schedule

Youth hockey: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday evenings from 7 to 9.

Adult hockey:

Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 7 to 9.

Sunday mornings from 9:30 to 11:30.

Mt. Everett High School hockey team plays Sunday evenings from 7 to 9.

All other times are shared with figure skaters, families, and recreational skaters—so skate responsibly! Please shovel before you leave.

For updates—call Parks Dept. at 528-1443 x248 (voicemail), or

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Paradise Lost

Long embedded in America's belief system was the notion that God had deliberately set aside, in isolation, its part of the world, freeing it from "foreign" corruptions and allowing a uniquely enlightened civilization to arise. That such a society indeed came forth has been an article of faith in our nation. American *exceptionalism* thus has its roots in this reading of providential history.

Accordingly, we've been ever alert for certain seeds of destruction harbored by "other" societies. These must not be allowed to take root and threaten our "American way of life." The founding generation, for example, identified and rejected several foundational pillars of European society. Monarchy would have no place in our new republic. Neither would hereditary noblemen, an exclusively "established church," or a "standing army." These had all brought on countless woes over the centuries. Nor must we abide a landless peasantry. Instead, America would feature industrious land-owning yeomen, proud and independent members of society. When in the early nineteenth century factories sprang up in the countryside (textile, saw mills, iron works, etc.) we welcomed these "machines in the garden," and the absence of urban squalor, disease, and disorder that would plague Europe's industrial cities. Instead of a growing underclass, we welcomed an expanding and dynamic middle class, and our escape from bitter class divisions so visible overseas. Later, after having achieved wealth and power, Americans were repeatedly reminded of the fate of Rome. That once mighty empire, we were informed, had collapsed, weakened by indolence, luxury, corruption, and imperial overreach, a treacherous path that the United States must avoid.

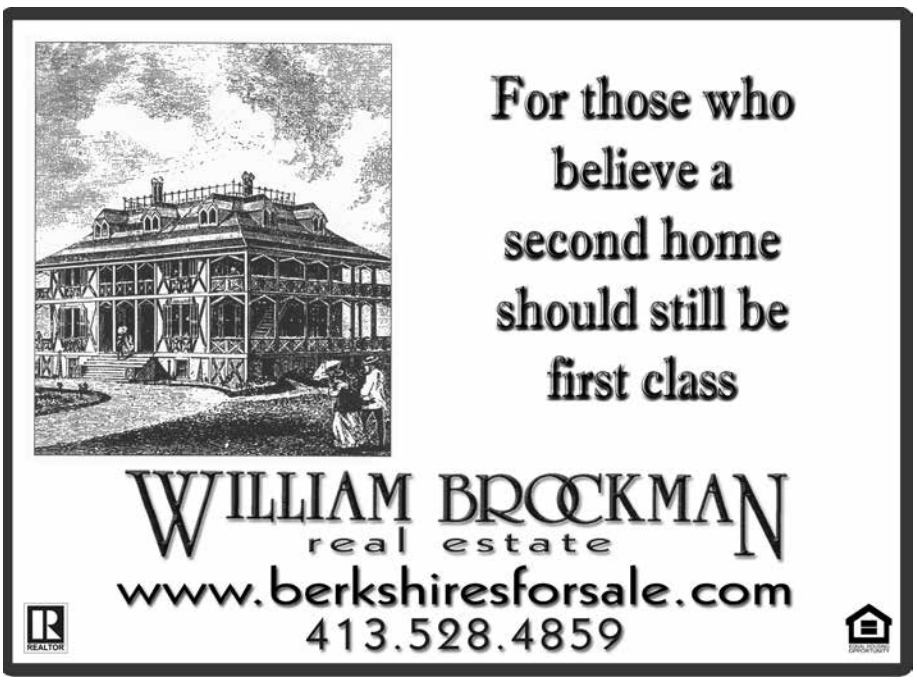
In the twentieth century, warnings about insidious "outside" influence and threats continued. In the aftermath of upheavals in Russia and Western Europe during and after World War I, America unequivocally rejected revolution as the way to overhaul society. When the Weimar Republic turned on the printing presses and saw its currency lose nearly all value, it served then, and ever since, as an object lesson for America about the dangers of fiscal anarchy and hyperinflation. Once communism took hold in Russia, such a system became an anathema in America, altogether incompatible with our "way of life." Associated as it was with godlessness, we were urged to root out any evidence of communist influence in the U.S. Socialism (often conflated with communism) fared no better. If introduced it would undermine the dynamism and demonstrated benefits of America's free market capitalism.

Warnings continue in our day lest America proceed along a path shown to be destructive elsewhere. The recent presidential campaign, for example, which saw accusations of a rigged election, voting fraud and suppression, and threats to reject the results, brought forth unwelcome comparisons to much maligned "banana republics." Adolph Hitler's rise to power was suddenly in the news, amid fears stoked by an election that contained strident nationalism, scapegoating, whiffs of violence, and massive, raucous rallies.

When early settlers conceived of the idea of America's special destiny, we were a people separated from most of the world by two vast oceans, splendidly isolated, largely free to go our own way. No longer. Our world is increasingly interconnected. The United States is severely limited in its ability to ward off intrusions from beyond our borders. Smart phones allow instant communication anywhere and everywhere. Cyber-attacks overspread continents; migrants, refugees, and terrorists spill over national boundaries; microorganisms travel far and wide, multi-national corporations operate across the globe, elites connect beyond nation states, and in response, "populist" waves roil one country after another.

Once there may have been a case for American innocence and American uniqueness. We could identify what we chose to reject beyond our borders, and with some assurance, keep such threats at bay. Today, millions of Americans wish—quite understandably—that remained possible. But the world has taken a different turn. We've been drawn in, and there is no point of return.

—Richard Skolnik



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Police Dept. Appointments

Love Monterey, not this select board.

As many of you know, I was a part-time police officer for the town of Monterey for fifteen years. During that time I enjoyed helping motorists by changing tires, fetching gas, and even loaning my garage to a motorist so he could change his serpentine belt out of a driving rainstorm late on a Sunday evening. I was always courteous when stopping speeding motorists and, as many of our residents can attest, have given verbal warnings saying "slow it down a bit" and "have a nice day" with a smile on my face.

After reaching the age of sixty-five and so not being able to do cruiser duties due to mandatory retirement, I was designated a special police officer so I could do details to help with traffic and supplement my social security income. I was a special police officer for a year and a half, and really enjoyed giving a hello or a thank-you wave to motorists, always wearing my white gloves.

On July 5, 2016, Chief Backhaus recommended me, along with other members of the police department, for reappointment. On that day all of Chief Backhaus's recommendations for reappointment were approved except mine. Without any discussion select board chair Kenneth Basler made a recommendation not to reappoint me, which was seconded by member Steven Weisz. The vote was 2 to 0 to not reappoint me, with board member Carol Edelman abstaining. No select board member ever spoke with me before or after the vote, and a call to Carol Edelman was never returned. I later heard that I had issues within the department.

The only issue I can see would be emails I sent to the Chief during the spring and early summer of 2015 informing him that I was repeatedly being bypassed for detail work in favor of an officer from another town's police department. Later in the year this officer was then appointed by the select board as a Monterey special police officer (as I was) and continued being called instead of me. I informed the Chief that I had seniority over this officer and so should be called before this officer. Then this officer was "upgraded" by the select board to a reserve/intermittent officer seemingly putting him ahead of me again. I informed the Chief that we were all reserve/intermittent officers per the training we received so this could not be used as a valid reason to call this officer before me.

On July 5, 2016, this officer was appointed by the select board as a part-time officer (even though he had never done cruiser duty or ever written a citation) and I was not reappointed.

Other than Chief Backhaus, I was the longest serving officer within the department and a Monterey resident and taxpayer for over forty years. My personnel file had no negative reports with only an "exceeds expectation" performance evaluation. I am also a military veteran having served in the US Army on active duty from 1970 to 1973. I strongly feel that I should have been reappointed and that a personnal vendetta should not have been directed against me.

My treatment by this select board shows me why there has been so much disharmony within town hall during the last couple of years, with more town clerks, treasurers, and accountants resigning than ever before, and other residents and department commissioners voicing displeasure with members of this select board. I feel this board would rather dictate and see their names in print than to discuss and resolve issues, which, if there were issues, is what should have been done in my case. I still have not heard from the select board specifically why I was not reappointed nor given an opportunity to discuss the issue. This is how this select board treats long-time residents and taxpayers of this town.

—Rudy Gero

Eleanor Bounous, Watercolors: A Memorial Exhibit

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The Ghostly Snowy Owl

As white winter storms descend upon us, wiping out features of our visual landscape, we might experience a visit from a migratory snowy owl, whose ghostly camouflaged, silent wings of predation confirm their arrival, along with the weather for which they are named. Their journey south from their Arctic realm is usually driven by the absence of food supply in the north. They particularly rely on lemmings, whose wide and unpredictable variations in population from year to year we label *irruptive*.

The snowy owls are known to return to the same tundra-looking landscape in our area, to perch on a fence post, as I have illustrated. They will perch for long periods of time on any platform, including hay bales and telephone poles, that gives them a predatory vantage point over the surrounding area. You must approach slowly, quietly, and downwind to see their blinking yellow eyes as they lean forward and swivel their heads to draw a bead on their prey. Equipped with remarkable daytime or nighttime vision and hearing, they descend on their prey, even those buried under snow, with deadly accuracy.

Like other predators, they are known to dive bomb intruders to their territories, not excluding attacks on humans. The male provides food for the nesting female, and continues to do so long after their offspring hatch. This aspect of their character has contributed to a literary reputation and a long storytelling history of wise old owls, even including the tiny saw-whet owls. In Western culture, this mystique goes back to a legend in Greek mythology, with an owl as a constant companion to Athene, the goddess of wisdom, and the owl considered sacred. In our day, snowy owls as literary inspiration live on, portraying as Harry Potter's Hedwig.

Snowy owls were artfully illustrated on the walls of prehistoric caves in southern France, but their presence is recorded even further back in the pages of time, in open strata of limestone, which contain fossils dating their origin to fifty million years ago. No wonder that most birdwatchers today will go out of their way for the experience and impression of an actual sighting.

I thank my *Monterey News* readers for sharing in my environmental appreciation.

—George B. Emmons

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Wildlife Report
December and January

This month's wildlife spotters have given us news of a wide range of birds and mammals. Suzanne Sawyer is seeing plenty of red-breasted nuthatches, also a few of the larger white-breasted ones. She has seen the small woodpeckers, also the larger red-bellied variety, cardinals, blue jays, mourning doves, titmice, juncos, goldfinches, and chickadees.

Ed Salsitz on Beartown Mountain Road has a suet feeder popular with both blue jays and a red-bellied woodpecker. He says the blue jays back down and let the woodpecker have first crack at the suet.

In early January Alice Berke saw evening grosbeaks…rarely seen visitors from the north, for a couple of days. She also reports three ravens that come often, two song sparrows, and a Cooper's hawk that took a blue jay recently. There are both red-bellied and pileated woodpeckers at her place, and both red-breasted and white-breasted nuthatches. Besides all this, Alice has seen hooded mergansers on Brewer Pond in December.

Steve Moore was at the intersection of Wellman Road and New Marlborough Road early in January and saw three grouse or partridges. He reports them to have been "a-gleaning," though not in a pear tree, and to have left abruptly and noisily when they saw him.

We have Maddox and Tiegen Stucker's latest wildlife submission, coming to us courtesy of Dominic Stucker:

"Maddox and Tiegen Stucker of Blue Hill Road report that they saw a porcupine in a tree den in the woods near their home, plus a male pheasant, and a rabbit. Tiegen also saw two turkeys fly over Corashire Road, with another dozen in a nearby field. While cross-country skiing at Gould Farm with their father, they saw mouse, squirrel, rabbit, fox, and deer tracks."

Mark Amstead saw this barred owl at Gould Farm.

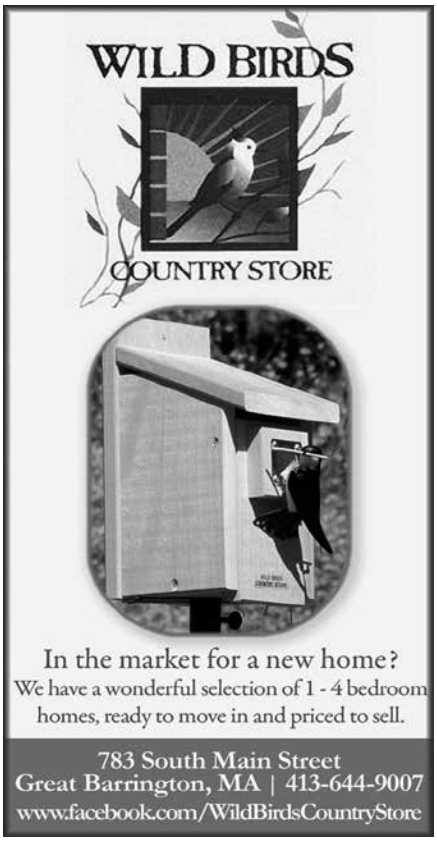
Stephen Moore

In the middle of January, the Moore-Jensen birdfeeder bit the dust (above) on New Marlborough Road, nearly certain evidence of a bear up and hungry. Mickey Jervas called the week before with an exciting and conclusive eyewitness account. She looked out and saw a bear in her yard. Having already been to the porch and found Mickey's big can of birdseed, this bear had carried it out onto the lawn, tipped it over, and was now lying down with its head in the can, gobbling up seeds. Mickey firmly urged the bear to leave the premises, or at least go to sleep, and the bear departed. The next day Mickey retrieved the can, put it inside the house, and took down her birdfeeder. That night the bear came back, hoping for seeds. All that was left on the porch was a pot full of decorative greens, so the bear took that out onto the lawn to examine it. This was not so rewarding, so the bear soon left, though it first checked out the birdhouse.

A week later, Mickey called again, this time to say she'd had three raccoons in the yard, an adult and two smaller ones, also a chipmunk. Clearly, some winter sleepers near Swann Road are awake, also at least one near New Marlborough Road. Spring must be upon us in these places, unless maybe winter never came. See article on bears and "the seven sleepers" on pages 14 and 15.

Many thanks for all this good news.

— Bonner McAllester, 528-9385
bonnermca@gmail.com.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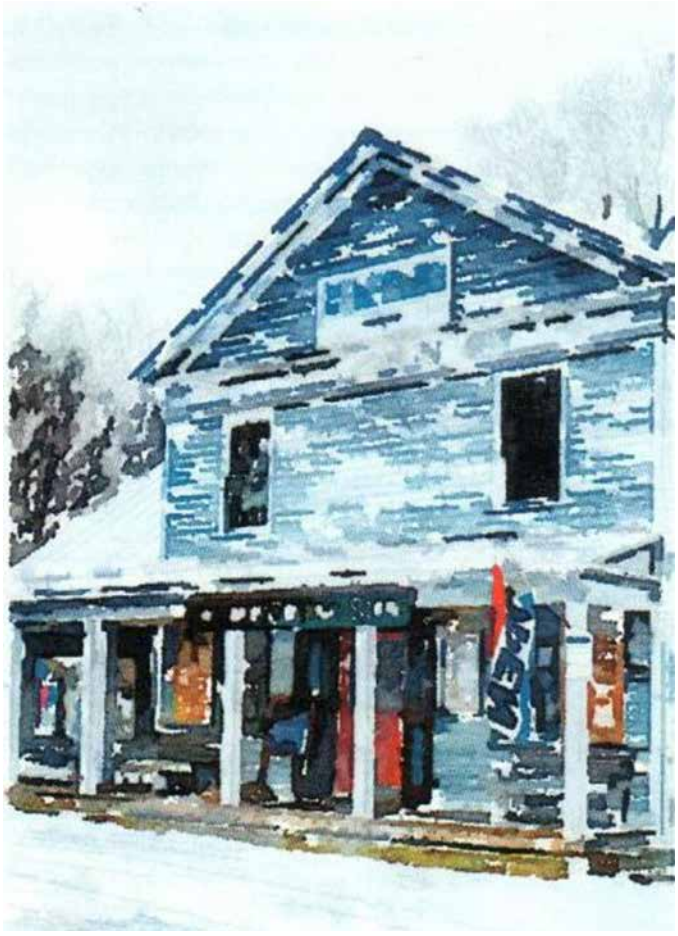

Monterey General Store, watercolor by Scott Cole.

A Berkshire Winter

The naked trees like skeletons now stand,
Staunch silhouettes against a sunset sky;
Their ice-clad branches creaking in the wind
While from chimneys plumes of smoke are rising high.
Old Boreas his organ music plays,
And often howls and whistles through the night;
Dipping and whirling in frolicsome ways
Piling the snow into mountains of white.

Then there are days in winter when the sun
Spreads scores of diamonds on the crusted snow,
Though conifers are bending to the ground
The howling, boisterous winds have ceased to blow.
So peaceful is the stillness when the wind
Seems lost to oblivion once more
And flocks of birds, to feed, come sailing in
Casting fleet shadows on my kitchen floor.

—Eleanor Kimberley, January 1997

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January 2017 Contributors

James Zell and Jody Ratner
Michael and Elizabeth Germain

Imagine the *Monterey News* without photographs. It would be pretty dull. In 2016 alone there were more photographs taken worldwide than the total of all photographs taken before, thanks to digital cameras and smart phones.

In addition to the generous donations folks send in, think about donating some photographs that have interesting compositions, or bring a little of the outside world into this paper. I'm sure they'd be much appreciated by our readers.

Conservation Commission Needs New Members

The conservation commission performs a valuable and vital function for the town of Monterey by protecting the wetland areas of our town.

Wetland resource areas provide critical habitat to wildlife and help maintain the aesthetic beauty of our town. They also provide priceless yet "free" services, including:

- Drinking water purification
- Groundwater recharge
- Flood control
- Pollution prevention

The Massachusetts Conservation Commission Act, passed in 1957, authorized each town in Massachusetts to establish a locally appointed municipal agency to plan for natural resource protection, acquire important land and water areas, and manage these properties for conservation and passive recreation. Permitting for any development project begins with the conservation commission.

The conservation commission is accepting letters of interest from residents to fill a vacancy on the commission for a three-year term. The commission meets the second Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m.

Residents willing to serve are encouraged to send a letter of interest, either by email to admin@montereyma.gov or by regular mail to Monterey Conservation Commission, PO Box 308, Monterey, MA 01245.

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Our town website is a great way to access information about the town.

Meetings and Events

Board of Health: Monday, February 6, at 4 p.m. Please call 528-1443 x111 to be placed on the agenda.

Chair Yoga: Tuesdays from 9 to 10 a.m.

Conservation Commission: Tuesday, February 14, at 6 p.m.

Council on Aging: Mondays, February 13 and 27, at 10 a.m.

Visiting Nurse: Berkshire VNA will be here on Thursday, February 9, from 2 to 3 p.m. No appointment necessary.

Foot Nurse: Thursday, March 9, 9 to 11:30 a.m., by appointment (please call 528-1443 x247). All ages are welcome.

Parks Commission: Wednesday, February 1, at 6 p.m.

Planning Board: Thursdays, February 9 and 23, at 7 p.m. Please call Maggie Leonard at 528-9685 to be placed on the agenda.

Select Board: Wednesdays, February 1, 8, 15, and 22, at 9 a.m. Please call 528-1443 x111 to be placed on the agenda.

Special Town Meeting: Thursday, March 2, at 7 p.m., at the fire house.

Town Hall Closings

The town hall will be closed on Monday, February 20, for Presidents Day. Individual office closings are posted on the town calendar and on the department's voicemail message.

We recommend always calling ahead.

Other News

Curtis Road Bridge

Well folks, here we go again. Just after Christmas we received an engineering report from the MA Department of Transportation that clarified what we had already expected, the Curtis Road bridge is in need of repair or replacement and will have to be posted for a lower weight limit. (Curtis Road runs from Route 23 to Gould Road, and is the main road to Gould Farm, our highway department, the transfer station, and the Gould Farm gravel quarry.) The posted weight limits will keep our larger highway trucks off the bridge when loaded. The same goes for the trucks using the quarry, our fire department pumper when loaded, and some delivery trucks to Gould Farm.

After conferring with our highway superintendent, Gould Farm, the fire department, and companies using the quarry, we have come up with the following as a temporary solution.

- Gould Road will be changed to a one-way road heading west from the transfer station to River Road. To do this, and to make it safe, the highway crew will be removing five trees along the downward stretch; they will widen the intersection at River Road to accommodate the large trucks; they will repair and upgrade the road surface; and they will install the necessary signage.
- Empty trucks will be able to use the Curtis Road bridge but will have to exit via Gould Road to River Road.
- The highway department and our police department will work with Gould Farm to allow for overweight delivery trucks to use the Gould Road driving east from River Road.

All of the above allows us to keep the Curtis Road bridge open to weight-appropriate traffic until we get a handle on the larger problem of what to do with the bridge and where we can find the monies to do the work.

Monterey Transfer Station

A quick update. We have experienced a delay in opening due to a backorder of the compactors. We are now looking for an early spring opening. The good news is that we can continue to use the old facility. Our new hauler, Valley Roll-off, is working with us during this delay, and our old hauler has been gracious enough to rent the old compactors to us and to allow Valley to use them. This will keep everything the same until we open the new facility.

Dave and Beth have been busy building the shelves, etc. for the new swap shop and are looking forward to moving into the new space. There will be a lengthy report next month about a number of new recycling programs that will start when the new transfer station opens.

—Kenn Basler, Chair
Steve Weisz and Carol Edelman
Monterey Select Board
(kenn@montereyma.gov)
(steve@montereyma.gov)
(carol@montereyma.gov)

For general inquiries, please click "Contact Us" at www.montereyma.gov

Town Contact Information

Emergency! 911

Town Administrator
528-1443 x119
townadmin@montereyma.gov

Administrative Assistant:
528-1443 x111
admin@montereyma.gov
(for town boards and misc. questions)

Assessor: 528-1443 x115
assessors@montereyma.gov

Building Department: 528-1443 x118 buildingsafety@montereyma.gov

Fire Department (non-emergency): 528-3136
fire_service@montereyfire.org

Highway Department: 528-1734
mhwy@verizon.net

Library: 528-3795
montereylibrary@gmail.com

Police Department (non-emergency): 528-1443 x116,
Alternate emergency 528-3211
mpdchief@montereyma.gov

Post Office: 528-4670

Tax Collector: 528-1443 x117
montereytax@yahoo.com
(for questions about your tax bill)

Town Clerk: 528-1443 x113
clerk@montereyma.gov
(for licenses and town records)

Calendar

Every Tuesday: Chair Yoga with Connie Wilson, 9 to 10 a.m., Monterey Town Hall. Free, sponsored by Monterey Parks Commission. See page 9.

Every Wednesday: Council on Aging, "Matter of Balance," from 1 to 3 p.m., through February 22, town hall.

Through March 4: Knox Gallery. Eleanor Bousnous, Watercolorist: A Memorial Exhibit. See page 8.

Wednesdays, February 1 and 15: Behavior Management series. Discuss strategies to help children in preschool through grade 5 control their behavior. 5:30 to 7 p.m. No fee. Children's Study Home Family Center, 446 Monterey Rd., Great Barrington. 413-645-3400, ext. 200.

Monday, February 6: Lake Garfield Working Group to discuss treatment options, 7 p.m., at town hall. See page 5.

Thursday, February 9: Berkshire VNA blood pressure and wellness clinic, from 2 to 3 p.m. No appointment necessary.

Wednesday, February 15: Community potluck dinner, 6 p.m., Monterey Meetinghouse. Deborah Alecson on Bereavement. See page 7.

Thursday, February 16: Improving Family Connections. Discuss ways to improve parent-child communication and sibling relationships. 5:30 to 7 p.m. No fee. Children's Study Home Family Center, 446 Monterey Rd., Great Barrington. 413-645-3400, ext. 200.

Saturday, February 18: Ulhan—Champion trotter, slide show by Steve Pullen. Knox Gallery, 7:30 p.m. See page 11.

Monday, February 20:

Monterey News deadline.

Skating party, 1 to 4 p.m., skating rink behind the firehouse.

Monday, February 27: Adult book group meets to discuss *The Duke of Deception*, by Geoffrey Wolffe, 7:30 p.m., Monterey Library.

Thursday, March 2: Special town meeting, 7 p.m., firehouse.

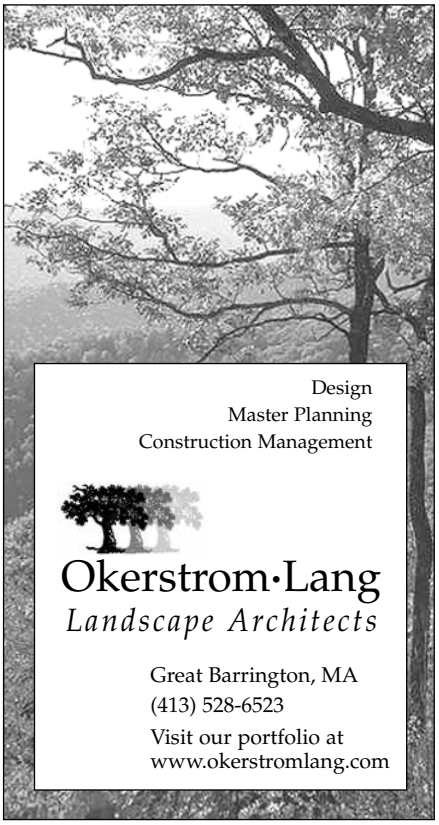
Saturday, March 11: Rabies clinic, 9 to 11:30 a.m. See page 3.

Cancellation

Saturday, February 4: Monterey church history at the Knox Gallery. Will be rescheduled.—Wendy Germain

Monterey News

The *Monterey News* is an independent nonprofit corporation dedicated to fostering communication in the Monterey community. Our editorial address is PO Box 9, Monterey, MA, 01245. We invite signed letters, articles, drawings, poetry, and photographs. Submissions may also be sent to the email address below. Address requests for advertising rates and further information to the Editor, or telephone us at 413-528-4007 or email montereynews9@gmail.com.



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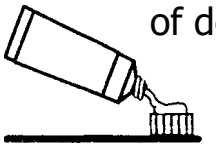

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Contributions from local artists this month:
Maureen Banner, p. 20; Scott Cole, p. 20;
George Emmons, p. 18; Bonner McAllester, p. 14

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